

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## LETTRES À LA RÉDACTION

### A veterinary prisoner of conscience

Dear Sir:

Canadian veterinarians may wish to help try to obtain the release from prison of a veterinary prisoner of conscience in the fellow Commonwealth country of Malawi.

Dr. Goodluck Mhango is a 36-year-old veterinarian imprisoned since 1987. He was arrested shortly after his exiled journalist brother wrote an article in a foreign magazine critical of the policies of the government of Malawi. Dr. Mhango suffered severe head injuries from police beatings at the time of his arrest and since that time has remained in prison, without charge or trial. Amnesty International has adopted him as a "prisoner of conscience".

Veterinarians may write polite letters appealing for the immediate and unconditional release of

Dr. Mhango to: Mr. John Tembo, Treasurer of the Malawi Congress Party, Postal Bag 388, Lilongwe 3, Malawi, sending copies to Mr. MacLean Machinjili, High Commissioner for Malawi, 7 Clemow Avenue, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 2A9.

Further information about Dr. Mhango can be obtained from "Veterinarians for Amnesty International".

*John Prescott, Vet MB, PhD  
Veterinarians for Amnesty International  
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### Proliferative and necrotizing pneumonia

Dear Sir:

We were interested to read the reports of proliferative and necrotizing pneumonia (PNP) of swine which were published in your journal recently (1,2). This condition, as described by Morin et al (3), shows the following similarities to porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome (PRRS, Blue-eared pig disease), which has been identified in Europe recently:

- a) Respiratory disease in young stock
- b) Anorexia and pyrexia in sows
- c) High levels of stillbirths, late abortions and neonatal mortality
- d) Evidence of viral etiology, exact type unknown.

Morin et al also consider that PNP may be related to "mystery swine disease" which has been prevalent in the USA, particularly the midwest, since 1987, and which shows the above features.

PRRS has now been identified in the British pig population, and we have established the Pig Disease Information Center, to collect and disseminate information about research being carried out into this disease. We would be very pleased to hear from anyone

involved in research on similar conditions, such as PNP, who wishes to participate in an exchange of information. Please write to the address below.

*Dr. Caroline Manser, Technical Officer  
Dr. M.J. Meredith, Director  
Pig Disease Information Center  
Department of Veterinary Medicine  
University of Cambridge  
Madingley Road  
Cambridge, United Kingdom  
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#### References

1. Thomson G, Carman S. Proliferative and necrotizing pneumonia (PNP) of swine: the Ontario situation. *Can Vet J* 1991; 32: 313.
2. Austin R, Bystrom J, Urquhart C. Proliferative and necrotizing pneumonia of swine in Manitoba. *Can Vet J* 1991; 32: 371.
3. Morin M, Girard C, ElAzhary Y, Fajardo R, Drolet R, Lagacé A. Severe and proliferative and necrotizing pneumonia in pigs: A newly recognized disease. *Can Vet J* 1990; 31: 837-839.

### There is no such drug or word as 'euthanol'

Dear Sir:

The word 'euthanol' continues to creep into the pages of the *Canadian Veterinary Journal*, where it seems to be used as a synonym or as a generic term for 'euthanasia solution'. Beyond careless veterinary usage, this word is not recognized in the English language. It resembles the trade names of some currently available products, whose active ingredient is sodium

pentobarbital, which is an aldehyde (ending in -al), not an alcohol (ending in -ol): "Euthanyl", marketed by M.T.C. Pharmaceuticals in two strengths, 240 mg/ml and 540 mg/ml; and "Euthansol", marketed by Schering Canada, Inc. in a single strength, 340 mg/ml.

In the pursuit of literacy, we should strive to expunge this non-word, or nonce word, from our

repertoire and to use the general phrase or the proper trade name in our writings.

**John B. Delack, PhD, DVM**  
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*Editor's note: Dr. Delack is correct, there is no such word as 'euthanol'. The error occurred in the comments on the April 1991 — Ethical Question of the Month which were published in the July 1991 issue of the CVJ. We are grateful to Dr. Delack for bringing the error to our attention, and will endeavour to ensure that it doesn't happen again. DH*

## Cryptosporidiosis associated with piglet enteritis — follow-up

Dear Sir:

In the March 1991 issue of the *Canadian Veterinary Journal*, I described a case of weanling enteritis in which structures described as *Cryptosporidium* sp. were observed in the crypts of the large intestine from a five-week-old piglet (1).

Following publication, Dr. E. Sanford suggested in a letter to the editor (2) that the structures observed may have been proteinaceous blebs from the apical cytoplasm of crypt enterocytes rather than *Cryptosporidium* sp., sporidia, because of the early autolytical change described. Dr. Sanford recommended electron microscopy in such cases in an attempt to verify the diagnosis.

Electron microscopic studies confirmed that the structures observed were parasites, though early autolytic change hindered a satisfactory examination of the organisms. The structural appearance of the parasites was suggestive of *Cryptosporidium* sp., with some detail of cell attachment sites still notable in the micrographs.

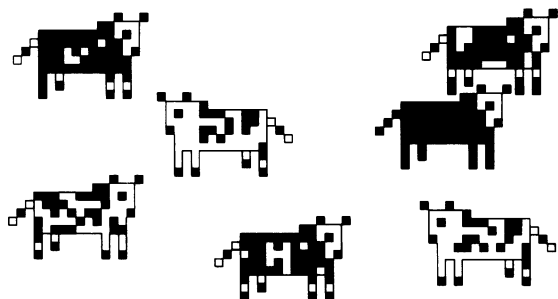
I thank Dr. L.D. Armstrong, Head, Veterinary Diagnostics Branch of the Animal Health Division, Alberta Agriculture, Edmonton, for the electron microscopic studies done on these specimens.

**John Coates, DVM**  
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### References

1. Coates JW. Cryptosporidiosis in weanling piglets with enteritis. *Can Vet J* 1991; 32: 181.
2. Sanford SE. Diagnosis of cryptosporidiosis in piglets. (Letter to the editor) *Can Vet J* 1991; 32: 325.

## Animal Health Week May 3 - 9, 1992



**Animal Health  
Affects Us All**

*Letters to the Editor on topics of general veterinary interest are solicited, and ongoing debate on controversial topics is encouraged through this feature. Also welcomed are letters which challenge, support, or add to articles appearing in the CVJ in the previous two months. Authors will be allowed one month for reply, so that their reply may appear with the relevant letter in the same issue, usually within two months of receipt. Letters must be signed by all authors, should not exceed 500 words (two double-spaced typewritten pages), and may be abridged and edited as necessary.*

*Les Lettres à la rédaction sont en principe des textes portant sur des intérêts généraux pour les vétérinaires ou qui ajoutent au débat sur des sujets controversés. Ce sont des textes rédigés à notre demande, mais nous acceptons aussi les lettres qui remettent en question ou appuient les articles qui ont paru dans la Revue dans les deux mois précédents ou y ajoutent quelque chose. Les auteurs auront un mois pour répondre, de façon que leur réponse puisse figurer avec la lettre pertinente dans le même numéro, habituellement dans les deux mois suivant leur réception. Les lettres doivent être signées par tous les auteurs, ne pas dépasser 500 mots (deux pages de texte à double interligne) et peuvent être abrégées et révisées au besoin.*